

Testimony to the Joint Committee on Aging
February 26, 2013

H.B. 6460 AN ACT LIMITING THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION ABOUT MISSING ADULTS

To the Joint Committee on Aging - my name is Patricia Jean Taglialavore, and I live in New Britain, CT. **I am submitting my testimony to respectfully request that you support H.B. 6460 AN ACT LIMITING THE RELEASE OF INFORMATION ABOUT MISSING ADULTS.** I am making this request because I believe that the information provided in the Silver Alerts about individuals' mental health diagnoses are not respectful of the right to privacy.

Being a young adult in recovery for mental illness, as well as a graduate student in a professional counseling program, I am constantly walking a fine line between my personal recovery and my professional role as a clinician. I find myself having to water down some of my experiences to maintain a sense of normalcy and respect from others in the field of mental health.

On a social level, there are already very difficult challenges to face in regards to incorporating mental health diagnoses into positive self-concepts. Systems like the Silver Alert System not only hold people back from accepting themselves as individuals, but hold others in society back from accepting them, too.

The Silver Alert System is invasive. It involves an under-qualified person stringing together labels for the sake of convenience. I say under-qualified because a qualified person would use person-first language and communicate in a progressive manner. And I say convenience because there is not a fundamental need to report private information about an individual's mental health diagnosis, symptoms, or need for medication.

I believe strongly that it is essential for you to support Senate Bill 516, as it is a step in the direction of treating all humans as autonomous and protecting their rights.

Respectfully, Tricia Jean Taglialovore